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PRESS RELEASE

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HELEN LEVITT PHOTOGRAPHS

September 22 - November 12, 1989

The major subject of Helen Levitt's long and distinguished photography career has been New York City street life. The exhibition, **Helen Levitt Photographs**, on view from September 22 through November 12 in Gallery D at The Cleveland Museum of Art, features nostalgic New York scenes typical of her perceptive photography.

Of the 19 works in the show, 15 are gelatin silver prints, 13 of which are titled "New York, ca. 1940-1945." These 1940s scenes are of men and women sitting on stoops or leaning in doorways, little boys playing or fighting, kids running around with masks on their faces, and adults just lounging. One photograph shows a busy sidewalk scene of two boys holding up the frame of a mirror. The glass from the mirror has been shattered and lies in the gutter, so instead of seeing a reflection, we see the image behind, that of another boy, peddling a tricycle within the mirrorless frame. Two recent black-and-white photographs--"Brooklyn, New York, 1982" and "New York, 1985"--are in the show, along with four color prints from the early 1970s.

Levitt is known as a realist who records a scene without meddling in it. While she does much of her photography in lower-class neighborhoods and slum areas, what she captures are the dimensions of spirit that exist there. Levitt was born in New York and continues to live there.

The exhibition was organized by Tom Hinson, curator of contemporary art.

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